/13 cont./

000 phenomena created little gods, in contrast to the reasoning which assures us of the existence of a single God.

Creative is this Indian imagination which models their character and fills the world with fantastic beings! /14/

Chapter IV

Are the Indians Sad or Happy?

31. Contradictory evidence. 32. Somatic happiness and psychological happiness. 33. Under a humble cloak.... 34. The joke. 35. Religious anxiety?

C
114 31. Humboldt says, speaking of the Chaima Indians:
157 "Taciturn, without joy, turned in on himself, he affects a grave and mysterious air. When someone has lived a brief time in the missions and when he has not yet become familiar with the aspect of the Indians, he finds himself tempted to take their indolence and the dullness of their faculties as an expression of melancholy and a propensity to meditate."

P Diametrically opposed to this judgment is Simpson's,
114 who, speaking of the Kamarakoto, says: "They are quite the
157 opposite of withdrawn and silent.... On the contrary, their chatter is interminable and their faces constantly have their emotions shining through. The usual expression on the face is
P a broad smile, and any amusing incident makes them burst
●[522] out in loud guffaws. They have an acute sense of humor and are always joking. They are very inclined to tell jokes." (P. 600.)

P The difficulty inherent in reducing to a single category
128 all the individuals of a single tribe (however small it may be) is clear, not to mention doing it for different tribes, although

/15 cont./

114 seem blank to us, the Indians generally hide a happy heart
152 overflowing with good humor. This is real, or psychological, happiness.

152 Freedom from difficulty in material life, the absence of psychological preoccupations, good social relations, an assiduous contemplation of nature, a scarcity of ambitions, etc., cannot do less than produce a certain intimate complacency, if it does not reach euphoria and felicity.

Naturally this is not a very exhilarating joy, but it is a truer one than the "laughter of dry or baked earth," which is told us of the Tuarez tribe or the "laughter of thorns in the fire," of which the Holy Books speak to us.

● 522 34. The joke, an example of cleverness and an arm
195 against ennui and tediousness, is not rare in the language of the Indians. Let us look, only by way of an example and not as a cataloge, at some of these:

E puek av-ichí? -- Ue-yepué puek edai?
What are you doing? What are you in? -- I am in my bones.

E puek av-echiri-pueri? -- Yuré neké; u-motá ponkón sekanon-cán puek man.

Why are you shouting? -- Not I, it is the inhabitants of my shoulder (hill) who are vexed (e.g., when carrying sticks).

On being asked to assent to a controversial matter, instead of answering iná, iná, "yes, yes," or iná-pe-ré, "it seems so," they respond with nearly homonymous phrases, but with an absolutely different meaning, ay-euná, y-euná, piok dapón, "your nose, full of pimples," or euná piré, "your reddish nose."

To say that they are very hungry frequently /16/ they are heard to say: u-paná kuntá karé euayichik, "I am with a belly up to my ear lobes."

On river trips, during which tediousness can be extreme, they can often be heard seeking relief now shouting at a black bird, "this isn't black territory," now at a tijereta, "that one stole some scissors for a tail," now shouting at a macaw, "that

/16 cont./

522 195 one took an arrow from the Indians for his tail and a fruit for a head," or now at a monkey which is running off, startled, "brother, just when I'm coming to visit, you go away," etc....

114 35. Many other manifestations of gaiety are beyond the scope of study in the short space of these little chapters. But I do not wish to end without calling attention to the poorly disguised sectarianism with which Dr. Simpson and his wife Ana Roe have tried to disparage religious ideas, by saying that they are bad for the Indians and the cause of an "anxiety" nothing less than "neurotic."

This statement, so gratuitous and tendentious, is on a par with another of the same author, in which he says that clothing creates modesty and that it is not shame that seeks clothing, and those other grammatical statements in which he says that there is no "clear distinction between nouns and adjectives" and "it is impossible to distinguish the adverb, preposition, or conjunction as special parts of speech."

It is a pity that the doctor has put into a ragged sack the warning that he himself puts in his prologue: "In matters dealing with the much more difficult problems of social culture, my observations are by necessity less complete. The best work in this specialty requires years of residence, an absolute command of the local dialect, and the fullest confidence of the Indians. We had only a few weeks available...."

So that, inasmuch as he has on his own confessed his ignorance, I do not believe it necessary to insist upon a refutation of such an assertion.

/27 cont./

251/ like have no meaning in these regions. Therefore authors
261 very correctly say: "The Indian is not economical; this virtue is unknown in the tropics."

273 58. Worse than the intemperance of the Indians in food are their excesses in drink. We continue quoting: "Their vehement addiction is drink, which they themselves prepare"; kachirí itself and various types of carato. And from excessive drinking, here as everywhere, and more when the fermentation continues in the stomach, come the foams of ire and lustfulness. "When the Indian is in his cups, he is no longer the gentle man of the forest; he brags of his bravery and provokes arguments that end in fights, with their resulting tribute of blood.... The women also take part in these orgies and lose their habitually modest behavior," shy and chaste.

The kachirí of the Indians, which in its many varieties is always a purée in fermentation, is something that they consider so necessary for their daily diet that, as Fr. Eulogio de Villarín wrote with beautiful hyperbole: "there would be a shortage of water in the rivers before one of kachirí among the Indians." [522] Its lack brings about serious ill humor on the part of the men [574] against their women; and with greater embarrassment than the husbands of Caná (Caanan) will the Indians say to their guests that they have no kachirí.

261 Hunger, properly, for the Indian, is the lack of vegetable
262 food, in the form of kachirí, sakura, etc., which they call /28/ iuán; in contrast the lack of game (animal food) is called
262 tarui, which does not refer to satiety but to vigour. In order to understand all of this well, bear in mind that the diet of these Indians lies on the following bases: drinks, various purées, fermented or not, made with plantains /plátanos/, bananas /cambures/, maize, ocumo, etc., and which receive the names yeukú and kachirí; bread, made with bitter yucca, in the form of toasted flour or mafloco and preferably in the form of cakes of cassava; sauce, the juice /yare/ of bitter yucca

/37 cont./

829 522 81. Before putting an end to this brief study, I should advise that by the natural law of retaliation, the Indians, acute observers of our customs and very fond of humor, also make fun of our hygienic customs and of some of our foods, which are likewise repugnant to them. Thus, for example, pork, eggs, etc. They also laugh at our corrals and houses for domestic animals, which are not always sufficiently separated from the houses and which do not smell like a bed of roses. And of our country privies, I have heard from them an infinite number of satirical remarks very similar to the popular saying, "What is it that the rich gather up, which the poor throw away?" with reference to nasal secretions.

515 539 82. To poke fun at dirty persons -- for such a person is never lacking among the Indians, as everywhere else -- who flee from bathing like a cat from water, and abhor cleanliness as the devil the cross, they have the story of the Indian kamotipán, that is to say, the one who had mushrooms and squash sprout all over him, like ears all over his body, so that they made a noise when he walked along, so that game and fish fled and he had to be submitted to a great scraping and bathing by frogs, after which he became a good fisher and hunter.

Chapter X

What Is There To Their Corpulence and Healthiness?

Dem

83. Exaggeration in the reports. 84. The legend of the golden age. 85. Endemic diseases. 86. Are they not perfect herbists? 87. Medicine and magic: curers and enchanters. 88. Charms. 89. An Egyptian charm and a Pemón one. 90. Spiritual religion and corporal medicine.

24/ relatives, with inedible fruit, seem more probably to be indigenous to America.
177 In any case whenever bananas appeared they are now so ancient here that they
[173] are an integral and truly native feature in Indian life. The Kamarakotos have no idea that they are not native and no legends of a time when they were not known.[109]

24/ Sugar cane is also an old introduction, although probably not so old as
262 bananas. It is hardly an essential food, but is much enjoyed. Watermelons
177 are known by the Indians to have been introduced recently. They also say that squash and beans are recent, although these are native foods and are known to them by purely Carib names. Perhaps they meant only that the particular plants now growing there are from seeds brought in from elsewhere.

24/ Although corn (i.e. maize) is known and eaten, it is not plentiful and is
262 not really a staple. These are casave and not maize Indians.

The other root plants, Dioscorea, Xanthosoma, and Ipomea are abundant and may be ranked next to casave as staples. The true potato, Solanum, is not known, and this region is lower and warmer than any in which it was cultivated in pre-Columbian times.

24/ Although cacao has been supposed to be native to this general part of South America, none was observed and it appears to be unknown to the Kamarakotos. Other noteworthy omissions of plants that are cultivated by allied tribes, for instance in British Guiana, are the several citrus fruits and the avocado ("aguacate"), Persea. The former are introduced plants that have not yet penetrated this far; the latter is a native plant that, for some unknown reason, is rare in this region where it would, nevertheless, almost surely produce well.

[132] Several useful wild plants, like species of Bromelia, Bixa, and Genipa, are sometimes planted but are not commonly cultivated forms.

Animal Foods.

23/ In distinction from plant foods, practically all animal foods are wild.
262 A solitary pig was once introduced into Kamarata (I do not know from where)
[177] but it is now dead and no others have been introduced. The only domestic ani-
235 mals are dogs, which are not eaten, and chickens, which have recently been
[322] introduced and are not common. At Uruyén, when we were there, all the chickens were roosters — a subject for joking comment by the Indians, who have a keen (if somewhat robust) sense of humor. Some birds, especially small parrots or parakeets and moriche birds, are kept as pets but they are not bred in captivity and are not raised to eat so cannot be called domestic or food animals.

224 The favorite animal food is peccary, especially the larger species called
262 po.inga, and it is the principal goal of the hunter. The other peccary, pakira, is also prized as are the two kinds of deer, waikin and kutsari, the lapa, urana, the acure, akuri, and the tapir, maikuri (see Vocabulary for more exact identification of these animals).[1] [2]

[1] [see footnote on p. 319, category 116 - Analyst]
[2] [see vocabulary on pp. 54-59, category 116 - Analyst]

539 776 roles can, however, be seen in the fact that Piaimá is commonly represented as a familiar of the piaches, although hopelessly dangerous to other Indians, and even as teaching the piaches their peculiar arts and spells.

Character and Habits

157 Much of Kamarakoto character is evident from what has already been said, for character is inherent not only in the social culture of a people but also in what they make and use, in what they eat and drink, and in how they talk. Of course Kamarakotos show marked differences in personal character, but it is quite possible to speak also of a tribal norm in this respect. Indeed it was our impression that they are more uniform in character than are most civilized communities, and this is natural because of the almost complete uniformity in their lives, lack of division of labor or differentiation of habits as between different household groups, frequent social contacts with each other, and fairly uniform genetic heritage.

157 171 [197] [269] The Kamarakotos are Caribs and the Caribs have a bad name historically. Many of them were cannibals and they have even given us our word "cannibal."[223] Many Caribs were quarrelsome and warlike, a scourge to their neighbors and a terror to the white invaders. Some of them, notably the Motilones, have not been conquered to this day and still exact a heavy toll of life from those who attempt to travel in their fastnesses. Such a picture is, however, completely 157 and ridiculously false as applied to the Kamarakotos. Their most obvious character traits, as we saw them, are mildness and gaiety. They are happy, affectionate people who seldom quarrel and seldom show the slightest sign of anger or of opposition.

Humor.

157 152 Kamarakotos are anything but dour and silent — they do not belong to what some popular writers in North America call the "ugh" school of Indians. On the contrary, they chatter endlessly and their facile emotions are usually obvious. The common facial expression is a broad smile, and any amusing 157 incident gives rise to gales of loud laughter. They have a keen sense of humor 522 and are constantly joking. Puns are in high favor (I have noted some on previous pages). A few other incidents exemplify the sort of things that the Kamarakotos think are funny (and we shared this opinion). The fact that a flock of chickens included only roosters gave rise to obvious comments, gaily received. When I had been measuring their heads and we were about to set off to visit "Kamarakoto," the enormous stone that is believed to be their petrified ancestor, I was told to be sure to bring my calipers (span about 30 centimeters)

223 [see footnote on pp. 332-33, category 116 – Analyst]
[text continues on p. 263]

157 522 because this would be a head measurement that was really worth-while. A young unmarried man taking a length of cloth for a woman's dress as part of his pay was surrounded by a crowd making robustly insulting remarks accompanied [824] by loud guffaws in which he sheepishly joined. Even a happy surprise that is [381] not essentially humorous, such as unexpectedly encountering a tree full of ripe [302] "caruto" fruits (used for face paint), is an occasion for long laughter.

There are two noteworthy differences from supposedly more civilized humor, and these are decidedly in the Kamarakoto's favor: we saw no case in which a physical injury or indignity was considered funny, and crude practical jokes and the startling or frightening of anyone were expressly avoided and considered quite the opposite of humorous.

Emotional Adjustment.

171 158 In northern Venezuela we observed that most members of the peon class are definitely neurotic.[224] Most of them live oppressed by anxiety, ridden by fear of almost everything around them, and in a state of worry with few and 158 brief remissions. The opposite is true of the Kamarakotos. No neurotic individ- [157] uals or states were observed among them. Anxiety and worry seemed almost unknown, and the whole tribe exhibited a degree of emotional adjustment that 155 could not be matched in any "civilized" community of equal size. It will not be a popular statement, but scientific conscience compels me to add that the almost complete absence of a formulated religion is certainly one element in this remarkably good adjustment, just as the burden of such a religion plays a definite and large role in the neurotic anxiety of the northern peones.[225] Another element, probably the most important, is the security and care enjoyed by the children, as noted below.

152 It is not true that fear is unknown and it is apparently, but not really, contradictory that the Kamarakotos are almost free of anxiety but are often afraid and have even been known to die of fear. They do not seriously fear [828] physical injury: what they fear is fear itself. They detest being startled and often show marked consideration in avoiding giving anyone a start or surprise. Playing peek-a-boo with a baby, so common with us, was never seen and might [254] indeed be considered a serious injury. They fear the kanaima, but in their stories of danger from kanaima the injury is seldom represented as inflicted by physical means but by a noise, or similar thing, that merely startles and frightens [539] the victim. I have noted the curious and revealing fact that in their version of the widespread "stachelsitz" (spiny bench) legend, the bench is not spiny at all and the damage is inflicted by fright and not, as in almost all other known versions of this story, by physical pain.

224, 225 [see footnotes on p. 333, category 116 - Analyst]

825 114 71. At least this is more probable than Azara's guess that it is a corruption of the Guaraní "caaigouaxou," "large forest-dweller."

72. Pittier & Tate omit this species from their Venezuelan check-list. We did not see it, but the Indians describe it unmistakably and it certainly occurs in Venezuela.

825 73. So-called in the Llanos — few Venezuelans seem to use any special name for these animals.

74. Koch-Grünberg gives p elo, apparently another version of "perro," as the Taurepán name of a mythical dog.

[114] 75. Koch-Grünberg is therefore almost surely mistaken in listing it as if it meant a distinct species of peccary and defining it as "a somewhat smaller (than T. albirostris), very bad wild pig."

From the form, meaning, and use of the word, it is possible that it is related to kanaima (No. 249), but this is only a guess and is not definitely probable.

● [522] 76. Told me as being a screamingly funny pun, because in Kamarakoto katsupara means "machete," which is used to kill chickens — typical Kamarakoto humor.

77. And Schomburgk gives the same word as Arekuna, compare my Kamarakoto informants' karibana, but this word is definitely not Kamarakoto.

78. The word "caimán" in Venezuela is more often applied to the true American crocodile than to the caiman.

824 241 197 114 79. Nordenskiöld (1922) notes the two Carib roots, variants more or less like napi and cha' (or chak), which in Kamarakoto are napwei, a Dioscorea, and (i)cha', Ipomea. He gives both as meaning Ipomea and suggests that when the Caribs first spread over South America they had these two words for the single plant. This seems to me highly unlikely and, indeed it is really disproven by the frequent appearance of both words in one dialect, then always referring to two different plants. When this is true, the napi words always (as far as I have been able reliably to determine) refer to Dioscorea, and I strongly suspect that this is the original, primitive meaning of the root. Whether some Indians really have transferred it to Ipomea or whether this is merely an error of the records, is not clear — probably both are true in different cases. In any event, no historical conclusions can be properly based on such a list as